

TOWN HALL, CHELTENHAM.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 13th, 1909.



MR. THOMAS BEECHAM,
CONDUCTOR.

Beecham Orchestra

SIGNOR TAMINI,
TENOR.

MISS
KATHLEEN PARLOW,
VIOLINIST.

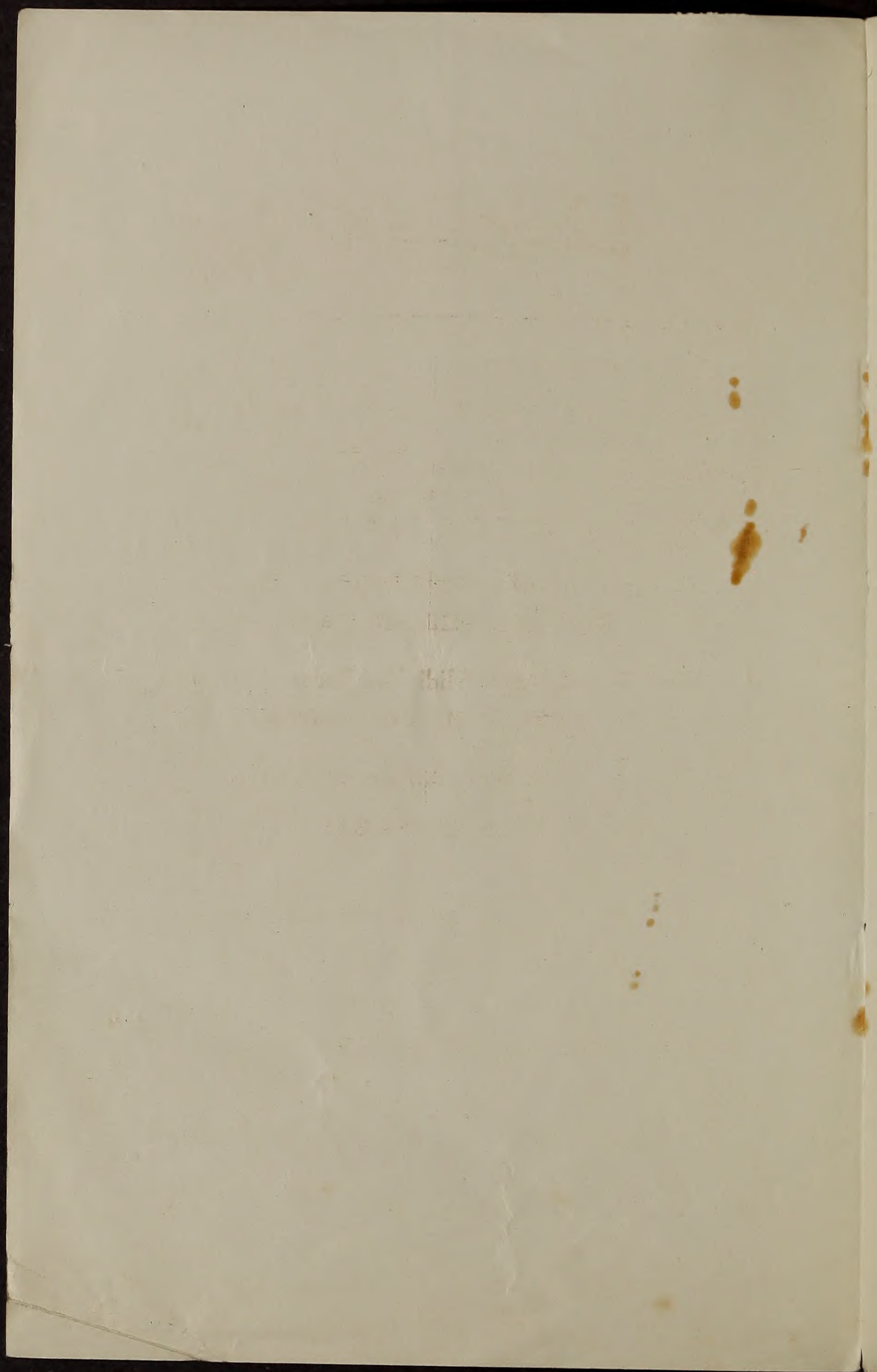
Tour Direction

Messrs. Baring Bros.

PROGRAMME

WORDS OF SONGS
ANALYTICAL NOTES

6d.



PROGRAMME

Overture ... "The Hebrides" ... *Mendelssohn*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Aria "Vesti la giubba" (Pagliacci) *Leoncavallo*
(On with the Motley.)
SIGNOR TAMINI.

Concerto for Violin with Orchestra ... *Max Bruch*
MISS KATHLEEN PARLOW.

Prelude ... L'Après-Midi d'un Faune ... *Debussy*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Song ... Lohengrin's Farewell (Lohengrin) ...
Wagner
SIGNOR TAMINI.

Interval of 10 Minutes.

New Symphony in A flat (Op. 55) ... *Elgar*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Conductor = = Mr. THOMAS BEECHAM.

Accompanist - - Mr. EDWARD AGATE.

Descriptive Notes By E. MARKHAM LEE, M.A.,
D. Mus. Cantab.

Mendelssohn ... Overture "Hebrides."

This most beautiful and poetic work is, like the composer's Scotch symphony, an outcome of a visit paid by Mendelssohn to Scotland in 1829. The work is also known by the title "Fingal's Cave." Its exquisite character enables it to rank perhaps highest of all Mendelssohn's concert Overtures, and it presents to the ear a tone-poem of the most fascinating charm. The work stands in B minor. At the outset the bare hollow minor chords permeated by the plaintive phrase which acts as a kind of *leit motive*, throw us into the appropriate emotional mood. The sound of surging waters, of the swell of the waves, and of the hollow echoes of the call are cleverly suggested. The fragments of melody intermittently heard have a haunting character, and while sombre in tone are not despairing.

In due course of the progress of the movement we reach the second subject, a truly melodious and beautiful one, in D major. This is at first given to the 'cellos and bassoons and is ear-haunting. Very piquant too is the development section, especially in the fascinating episodes where wind and strings answer one another with lively snatches (played *staccato*) of the main theme.

After a fine climax we reach the recapitulation, which is a condensation of the opening portion, the second theme being this time allotted (in B major) to the clarinet. The Coda, which concludes the overture, is strenuous and vigorous, and appears as though it would end in a magnificent outburst of sound, but the last few bars lead us to a soft repetition of the initial subject and with a couple of pianissimo pizzicato notes the overture concludes in a whisper.

Leoncavallo ... "Vesta la giubba" ... ("Pagliacci")

Vesta la giubba e la faccia infarina,
La gente paga rider vuole qua,
E se Arlecchin t'invola Colombina,
Ridi, Pagliaccio, e ognun applaudira.

Tramuta in lazzi lo spasmo ed il pipnto ;
In una smorfia il singhiozzo e'l dolor !
Ah !: Ridi, Pagliaccio, sul tuo amore infranto.
Ridi del dulo che t'avvelena il cor !

TRANSLATION.

To act, with my heart maddened with sorrow,
I know not what I'm saying or what I'm doing,
Yet I must face it. Courage, my heart !
Thou art not a man ; thou'rt but a jester !

On with the motley, the paint and the powder,
The people pay thee, and want their laugh, you know ;
If Harlequin thy Columbine has stolen,
Laugh, Punchinello ! The world will cry " Bravo !"
Go hide with laughter thy tears and thy sorrow,
Sing and be merry, playing thy part,
Laugh, Punchinello, for the love that is ended,
Laugh for the sorrow that is eating thy heart.

F. E. WEATHERLY.

Max Bruch *Concerto in G minor.*

1. Vorspiel Allegro Moderato. 2. Adagio. 3. Finale allegro energico

Max Bruch is one of the oldest living composers whose works are, by common consent, regarded as classics. He was born in Cologne in 1838, and after following his early bent in the direction of opera, without succeeding in making his ideas appreciated, turned his attention to large choral works with orchestra, on which his claim to greatness fittingly rests. With us, however, he is best known as a composer by his first violin concerto, written while he was musical director at Coblenz, between 1865 and 1867, a few of his wonderful male choruses, and the beautiful adaption of the old Hebrew melody, " Kol Nidrei " for the 'cello. Max Bruch was in England for some three years, when he was appointed conductor of Liverpool Philharmonic Society, after the death of Sir Julius Benedict.

The breadth and thoughtfulness of the composer's melody is clearly marked in this G Minor Concerto, one which, dedicated to the master-violinist, Joachim, has always been a favourite alike with violinists and the public. The characteristic points which mark it as great among all modern Concertos for the violin are, first, its spontaneous melodic structure and the intimate knowledge it reveals in dealing with the technic of the solo instrument.

The vigorous opening theme of the first movement is preceded by some prelude passages of more than the usual length, closely resembling cadenzas, in fact. The second theme is a clever continuation of the first, and it flows along with great charm and movement. To the accompaniment—or, rather, the constructional background—is given, shortly after, an important episode in place of the recapitulation customary in the older works of the kind. The introduction is then utilised again with excellent effect.

The first movement is planned to lead straight into the second, a tender and most expressive adagio, in which the beautiful melody is contrasted most skilfully against little phrases of accompaniment which assume importance as the Movement proceeds. A tributary theme is next announced in the bass of the accompaniment, while above it the solo instrument plays graceful and brilliant triplet passages which reveal a marked characteristic of the composer, in that they have melodic as well as decorative beauties.

The spirited finale begins with an introduction in which the strongly marked rhythms of the themes employed are indicated in this exhilarating section, so effectively concluding a work of vigour and charm, is Hungarian in manner and feeling. There are two main themes, divided by a characteristic "triplet" episode. By the concise "summing-up" towards the end the interest is maintained throughout with great vivacity.

Debussy ... "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune."

Claude Achille Debussy, who was born at St. Germain-en-Laye in 1862, gained the Grand Prix de Rome at the Paris Conservatoire with a cantata, *L'Enfant Prodigue*, which was considered as one of the most remarkable creations ever submitted by a student. During his stay in the city, which the gaining of the prize enabled him to visit, he set Rossetti's

"Blessed Damsel" to music, but the Conservatoire authorities decided that this was much too revolutionary to be admitted. Debussy, however, was not deterred from following his own particular bent, and all his music exhibits a keenly individual style—highly imaginative and mystical. His lyric-drama *Pelleas et Melisande*—to Maeterlinck's text—produced at the Opera Comique Paris, in 1902, is generally considered his masterpiece, while his essentially spiritual setting of such typical modern French poets as Verlaine, Bandelaire, and Pierre Louys are universally admired.

This Symphonic Prelude has as its "programme" an eclogue by Mallarmé. A Faun rests in the heat of the day in the forest shade, and, turning his thoughts to nymphs and amorous delights, he imagines that he holds in his arms the Goddess of Love herself. But he breaks off from this thought—knowing that such presumption will bring dire punishment—and seeks forgetfulness in sleep.

Scored most delicately for a small orchestra—horns being the only brass—the Prelude—in one movement, containing three main sections—is a study in sound-impressionism, vague, dreamy, and exceedingly fanciful. The flute gives out the first theme, which is of a quaint pastoral nature, the horns coming in at the close with a little figure of which much subsequent use is made. This phrase is then accompanied by the muted strings, and as it proceeds a new figure, confided to the oboe, is added to it. The same phrase is then presented against a harp accompaniment, and yet again with another melody for the second violins, until it makes its appearance in the wood-wind with an accompaniment for muted horns. A curious archaic figure, first announced by the clarinet, based upon a scale of whole tones, leads on to what may be taken as the second section, marked *Piu animato*, in which a new melody is first heard on the oboe. As in the previous section, the theme is transferred from one set of instruments to another with great charm, and is developed with considerable freedom.

The third section may be regarded as beginning with the sustained melody which is given to the wood-wind and horns in octaves, at first accompanied by the strings and then, when this section of the orchestra takes it up, by the wood-wind and harps.

In the development of the material outlined above, characteristic use is made of varying rhythms in the accompaniments, and the employment of solo-instruments in exposition, and the Prelude ends with a return to the first theme.

Wagner. "Lohengrin's Farewell."

My trusty swan !
Oh that this summons ne'er had been !
Oh that this day I ne'er had seen !
I thought the year soon would be o'er,
When thy probation would have passed ;
Then, by the Grail's transcendent pow'r,
In thy true shape we'd meet at last !
O Elsa, think what joys thy doubts have ended !
Couldst thou not trust in me for one short year ?
Then thy dear brother, whom the Grail defended,
In life and honour thou hadst welcomed here.
If he returns when our sweet ties are broken,
This horn, this sword and ring give him in token ;
His arm will conquer when the sword he raises,
This horn will aid him in the hour of need,
This ring shall mind him who did most befriend him—
Of me, who saved thee from the depths of woe ;
Farewell ! Farewell ! Farewell !! my love, my wife,
Farewell ! Henceforth the Grail commands my life.
Farewell ! Farewell !

Edward Elgar. Symphony in A flat (Op. 55.)

- (a) Andante Nobilimente e semplice. Allegro.
- (b) Allegro molto.
- (c) Adagio.
- (d) Lento. Allegro.

This work, so long awaited by the admirers of the composer of "The Dream of Gerontius" and of the "Enigma" variations, appeared in the winter of 1908 and at once justified the opinions of those who had prophesied that when Elgar turned his attention to symphony he would do great things. Dedicated to Hans Richter, "True Artist and True Friend," this work has already earned for itself a notable reputation, and has been many times performed both in England and upon the Continent. It is not possible to appreciate the nobility and depth of its utterances at a single hearing ; study and oft-rehearing are necessary for a true estimate of the value of this, its composer's first, and (so far) only symphony.

A large orchestra is employed, the wind-instruments being most in sets of three : for instance the two oboes are supplemented by the cor anglais, the clarionets by the bass

clarinet, the bassoons by the double bassoon. Much use is also made of the harps.

The slow introduction to the first movement presents to us the dignified and emotional melody which at once shows the touch of the composer of "Gerontius." This solemn and noble melody in A flat heard on the flute, clarinet, bassoon and violas, has a steady march-like accompaniment, and in a way dominates the whole symphony. It is repeated by the full orchestra, and then the key changes (somewhat abruptly) to the remote tonality of D minor, in which the opening stands. This Allegro is impetuous and vigorous: it presents a large number of subjects for treatment; the first of these is forceful and passionate and is first heard upon the strings. In the absence of thematic quotation it is difficult to give any idea of the variety, both in melodic outline and in rhythmic structure, of the materials upon which this movement is constructed. The second subject, in the regular key of the relative major (F) is in six-four time, and is given to the violins and repeated by the clarinet. The beginning of the development section may be discovered from the fact that it is upon the theme of the introductory melody, which now appears upon the horns in the key of C. New thematic matter is also introduced, and the working from here to the end of the movement (including a fine Coda) is very complex, especially in the matter of rhythm. After working up to an imposing climax the movement comes to a quiet ending.

The second movement is the shortest of the four and stands in the key of F sharp minor: it is constructed upon a busy fluttering little figure for the violins in very rapid notes. too serious in character to be termed a Scherzo, it has much of the lightness of that class of movement. In contrast to the first subject is a bucolic and heavily masked one in C sharp minor, heard upon the violas and clarinets; then follows a return of the first theme. This part of the movement ends in A major: a change to the key of B flat (remote again) ensues, and the Trio portion is presented: this consists mainly of a theme played by the flutes, and continued by the violins. When this has been to some extent utilised there is a return of the earlier part of the Allegro Molto (the F sharp minor subject) which gradually quiets down until merely a single note is left hanging almost inaudibly on.

This note serves as the connecting link between the second and third movements, for the *Adagio* here begins without any break. It is difficult to speak other than extravagantly of the serene beauty of this glorious *Adagio Cantabile*; it is

one of the most highly emotional and poetically conceived of all slow movements, and the hearer is led from beauty to beauty, and there is much to enchant the ear, both in luscious melody, in sonorous orchestration, and in ingenuity of device. The theme upon which it is constructed and which is heard upon all the violins, is a note-for-note adaptation of the subject of the second movement (the *Allegro Molto*), with complete change of rhythm and style. Elgar is here in his most felicitous mood, and this *Adagio* breathes a spirit of the most intense earnestness, and conveys to us a message of supreme beauty. This D major movement is indeed an inspired and noble piece of writing.

Like the first movement the last section of the symphony has an extended introduction in slow time. It first of all hints at several preceding fragments, prominent among which is the theme with which the whole work began. When the time quickens from *Lento* to *Allegro* a new and resolute subject is propounded of a strongly marked character in the key of D minor. Contrast to this is afforded by the second theme of the *Finale*, a melodious one for the clarinet. A notable passage follows, one in double sixths with a curious kind of double pedal below it which give the music here somewhat of an Eastern character, and which suggests the influence of Tchaikovski. After a time we are taken back to our "Motto" theme, and there is much energetic and forceful piling up of climaxes. At length we come to the Coda, a fine piece of writing, in which an apotheosis of the opening theme (once again and finally in the key of A major) is made with strings divided into many parts, with sonorous writing for the whole of the orchestra, and with a final thrilling proclamation of its noble notes from the brass, this theme thunders forth the ending (as it whispered in the opening) of this great symphony.

It is well to bear in mind that Elgar has disclaimed all "poetic basis" for his work: he has given it to us out of the fulness of his life's experience, and in it we may see the antagonism between the actual and the ideal in life, and the eventual triumph of the latter.



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